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HORNE NOTES PROGRESS OF MANY ARIZONA SCHOOLS TOWARD MAKING FEDERALLY MANDATED PERFORMANCE GOALS

ADEQUATE YEARLY PROGRESS (AYP) RESULTS RELEASED

PHOENIX (September 29, 2003) – Arizona Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Horne says a significant number of Arizona’s 226 Title I schools already under federal improvement status made progress under the federal No Child Left Behind measurement of Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). The results were released today by the Arizona Department of Education. 226 of Arizona’s 1800 schools were in improvement status, of the 226, 112 made AYP; 110 did not, and results for four schools are pending.

“This is the first real test of the federal No Child Left Behind education law as it affects Arizona school children,” Horne noted. “The schools that made AYP should be proud of the progress they have made, and I’m committed to using the Arizona Department of Education as a service provider to help improve those schools that didn’t make AYP.”

Under No Child Left Behind, federal Title I schools (schools that receive aid money because they serve a large percentage of lower income students) not making AYP for two consecutive years are placed in “Needs Improvement” status. Failure to make AYP a fourth year will result in a school being placed in “Corrective Action.”

Students who attend schools reported as “Needs Improvement” this year will be offered the chance to attend another school in their district with transportation costs to be paid for by the district. Sanctions become more stringent for schools still needing improvement in subsequent years.

Schools currently on the federal improvement list, but that made AYP this year will need to make AYP next year as well in order to be taken off improvement status.

AYP is measured using data from the AIMS test and requires that 95 percent of the

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students in a school take the test. It also requires that students from all applicable ethnic and social backgrounds in a school pass the test. Failure of even one demographic subgroup to pass the test or not be in attendance when it's given, results in failure for the entire school regardless of the performance of all other students. In addition, elementary school attendance, and high school graduation rates are factored into AYP.

“The AYP results are encouraging because so many schools are improving, but there's still plenty of work to do. I'm committed to making sure all of Arizona's school children get the best possible public education,” Horne concluded.

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